

a) the Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> powder used, either alone or together with the sintering aids, is thermally oxidized,

b) the Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> powder, either alone or together with the sintering aids and, if desired, further additives, is tribooxidized during milling and/or

c) the Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> powder is admixed with sintering aids or with SiO<sub>2</sub> or at least one SiO<sub>2</sub>-forming component either before or during milling[.] wherein the silicon nitride materials contain sintering aids and SiO<sub>2</sub>, and a grain boundary phase in which the molar ratio of the silicon dioxide in the grain boundary phase to the sintering additives including SiO<sub>2</sub> in the grain boundary phase is >60% and the oxide nitride content <1%.

*a1*  
Please delete Claim 3.

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

In the title, delete the title and insert --SILICON NITRIDE SUBSTANCES CONTAINING SINTERING ADDITIVES AND SiO<sub>2</sub>, METHOD FOR PRODUCING THEM AND USE OF THE SAME--.

At page 1, below the title, please add:

--BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--.

At page 2, above line 15, please add:

--DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--.

At page 5, line 31, after "character," please add:

--All parts and percentages are by weight unless otherwise indicated.--

At page 8, below line 22, please add:

-Although the present invention has been described in detail with reference to certain preferred versions thereof, other variations are possible. Therefore, the spirit and scope of the appended claims should not be limited to the description of the versions contained therein.--

*a2*  
Please add the following Abstract, submitted herein separately: